

Message Text

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ACTION NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 NSCE-00 SSO-00 ICAE-00
INRE-00 MCT-01 HA-05 AID-05 CCO-00 FBOE-00 PM-05
H-01 INR-10 L-03 SP-02 OC-06 OPR-02 PA-01
USSS-00 CA-01 A-01 SCS-06 OMB-01 SS-15 SY-05
TRSE-00 PC-01 /082 W
-----112986 291316Z /43

O 291156Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY KABUL
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7646
SECDEF
DIRNSA FT MEADE MD
CINCPAC
INFO AMEMBASSY ISLAMABAD IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI IMMEDIATE
AMEMBASSY TEHRAN IMMEDIATE

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 1 OF 2 KABUL 3310

CINCPAC FOR POLAD

ISLAMABAD, NEW DELHI, TEHRAN: ALSO FOR USDAOS

SITREP 17

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: ASEC, PINS, AF
SUBJECT: MILITARY CONFLICT IN KABUL

1. AS OF 1530 HOURS, APRIL 29, THE CITY OF KABUL IS
QUIET AND PUBLIC LIFE IS ASSUMING MANY NORMAL ASPECTS.
BODIES HAVE BEEN REMOVED AND GLASS IS BEING SWEEPED UP.
THE NATIONAL MILITARY REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (NMRC)'S
ORDER THAT ALL OFFICIALS AND WORKERS RETURN TO WORK
AT 0700, APRIL 30, HAS APPARENTLY BEEN OBEYED BY A
LARGE PERCENTAGE OF THE PERSONS INVOLVED. PEDESTRIAN
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TRAFFIC, HOWEVER, IS LARGELY DEVOID OF MIDDLE-CLASS
ELEMENTS WHO APPEAR TO BE STAYING AT HOME AND IN MANY
CASES KEEPING THEIR CHILDREN OUT OF SCHOOL. TANKS,
MANY WITH FLOWERS ON THEIR GUNS, ARE STATIONED AT
KEY LOCATIONS. SIX AIR FORCE JETS GAVE A DEMONSTRATION OF
STRENGTH THIS MORNING BY MAKING SEVERAL LOW PASSES OVER THE
CITY, AND MILITARY HELICOPTERS HAVE ALSO BEEN BUZZING OVER-

HEAD. ALMOST ALL ROADS IN THE KABUL AREA HAVE BEEN OPENED AGAIN BY THE MILITARY AUTHORITIES. THE AIRPORT REMAINS CLOSED TO CIVILIAN TRAFFIC. WE HAVE NOT YET BEEN CONTACTED BY THE NEW RULERS OF KABUL, THE NATIONAL MILITARY REVOLUTIONARY COUNCIL (NMRC).

2. ALL AMERICAN DIRECT-HIRE EMPLOYEES HAVE BEEN INSTRUCTED NOT TO HAVE ANY CONTACT WITH AFGHAN OFFICIALS UNTIL THE RECOGNITION ISSUE IS RESOLVED.

3. ALL AMERICANS HAVE ALSO BEEN ADVISED THAT THEY SHOULD NOT CONTACT AFGHAN FRIENDS OR ACQUAINTANCES BECAUSE IT MIGHT PROVE AMBARRASSING OR HARMFUL TO THEM AT THIS TIME.

4. ANY REQUESTS FOR ASYLUM WILL BE HANDLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH STANDARD DEPARTMENT OF STATE PROCEDURES (I.E., CITIZENS OF THIS COUNTRY CANNOT BE RECEIVED UNLESS THEIR LIFE OR SAFETY IS DIRECTLY THREATENED -- AS INDICATED, FOR EXAMPLE, BY A HOT-PURSUIT SITUATION).

5. WE HAVE EXCELLENT EVIDENCE THAT MEHRABUDDIN PAKTIAWAL, A KNOWN KHALQ LEADER, HAS BEEN NAMED MINISTER OF FINANCE. NUR MOHAMMAD TARAKI, THE KHALQ LEADER WHO WAS ARRESTED BY DAOUD ON APRIL 25, REAPPEARED AT HIS HOUSE ON THE EVENING OF APRIL 27, GARLANDED IN FLOWERS, AND RECEIVED BY HIS FAMILY AND FRIENDS IN A "JOYOUS REUNION". TARAKI'S HOUSE NOW HAS CONFIDENTIAL

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SPECIAL POLICE GUARDS. A RELIABLE CANADIAN SOURCE HAS INFORMED US THAT DR. SHAH WALI, WHO ALSO HAD BEEN ONE OF THE KHALQISTS ARRESTED BY DAOUD ON APRIL 25, IS NOW A MEMBER OF THE NMRC. AN AFGHAN SOURCE HAS PROVIDED US WITH THREE MORE NAMES OF PERSONS "WHO STARTED THE COUP, AND ARE IN COMMAND": WAFI, TAMUR, AND SAID ZAHED. THE LATTER TWO ARE SAID TO BE VERY JUNIOR AIR FORCE OFFICERS.

6. TWO BRITISH EYEWITNESSES, WHO HAD A VIEW OF THE PALACE ("ARG") COMPOUND FROM A NEARBY HIGH BUILDING, REPORTED SEEING LAYALIST REPUBLICAN GUARD TROOPS SURRENDER TO REBEL FORCES ON THE MORNING OF APRIL 28. THE SURRENDERED TROOPS WERE LINED UP AGAINST A WALL AND MACHINE GUNNED TO DEATH. REBEL OFFICERS THEN WALKED DOWN THE ROWS OF BODIES, FIRING THEIR PISTOLS INTO THE BACKS OF THE HEADS OF THOSE WHO WERE STILL MOVING. ANOTHER BRITISH EYEWITNESS, WHO LIVES NEAR THE POLICE STATION NEAR OUR AMERICAN COMMUNITY ASSOCIATION STAFF HOUSE IN KART-E-CHAR, REPORTED SEEING "HUNDREDS" OF PRISONERS BEING SHOT THERE -- ALSO THROUGH THE BULLET-IN-THE-BACK-OF-THE-HEAD METHOD. HE SAID THE SUMMARY EXECUTIONS TOOK "HOURS". HE HAD THE IMPRESSION THAT THOSE BEING EXECUTED WERE POLICE AND SECURITY OFFICIALS. WE HAVE NUMEROUS OTHER

REPORTS OF EXECUTIONS. COMMENT: ACCORDING TO ALL REPORTS, THE POLICE AND OTHER DAOUDIST MINISTRY OF INTERIOR OFFICIALS ARE AMONG THE PRINCIPAL VICTIMS OF THE COUP TROOPS. END OF COMMENT.

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CINCPAC FOR POLAD

7. AMONG THOSE DAOUDIST OFFICIALS WHO HAVE BEEN REPORTEDLY ARRESTED ARE: ABDUL HAKIM, GOVERNOR OF KABUL PROVINCE, WHO WAS SEEN BY AN FSL BEING REMOVED FROM HIS HOME ON APRIL 29; AND LT. GENERAL MOHAMMAD ISMAIL FARMAN, CHIEF OF NATIONAL PROTECTION (DAOUD'S SECURITY CHIEF).

8. AN AMERICAN WHO JUST RETURNED FROM GIRISHK AND KANDAHAR REPORTS THAT GIRISHK OFFICIALS SEEMED SURPRISED BY THE COUP NEWS THEY FIRST HEARD OVER RADIO AFGHANISTAN AT 1830 HOURS ON APRIL 27. TRAVELLING BETWEEN GIRISHK AND KANDAHAR ON APRIL 28, HE SAW NO UNUSUAL ACTIVITIES. AT AN ARMY BARRACKS IN KANDAHAR, HE SAW SEVERAL TROOPS ENTERING THE GATE. A MILITARY ROAD BLOCK WAS ESTABLISHED ON THE KANDAHAR-KABUL ROAD NORTH OF KANDAHAR ON APRIL 28 -- AND ANOTHER APPEARED TO HAVE BEEN ESTABLISHED ON THE FORK TO SPIN BALDAK.
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ON APRIL 30, HOWEVER, THE FIRST ROADBLOCK WAS LIFTED AND TRAFFIC WAS PERMITTED TO TRAVEL TO KABUL. THE AMERICAN REPORTED NO UNUSUAL MILITARY ACTIVITY ON THE RETURN TRIP, ASIDE FROM ADDITIONAL TROOPS AT TOLL STATIONS AND A FEW TANKS AND ARMORED PERSONNEL CARRIERS AT GHAZNI. HE WAS NOT ABLE TO DETERMINE WHETHER THE TROOPS IN THE SOUTH OR ALONG THE ROUTE WERE LAYALIST OR REBELS. HE SAW NO EVIDENCE OF COMBAT ALONG THE WAY EXCEPT FOR WHAT APPEARED TO BE A DEAD MAN NEAR SOME SOLDIERS GUARDING THE NEW BRIDGE AT WARDAK.

9. WE UNDERSTAND FROM AMERICAN TRAVELLERS THAT AFGHANISTAN'S ISLAM QALA FRONTIER POST WAS OPEN ON APRIL 28, BUT THAT THEY HAD TO PASS THROUGH ADDITIONAL MILITARY CHECK POINTS WHEN NEARING THE WESTERN CITY OF HERAT. AMERICAN TRAVELLERS HAVE REPORTED THAT THE TORKHAM BORDER POST AT THE AFGHAN END OF THE KHYBER PASS IS CLOSED.

10. THE CENTERS OF NMRC OPERATIONS APPEAR TO BE THE MINISTRIES OF NATIONAL DEFENSE, INTERIOR, AND JUSTICE. MILITARY, CIVILIAN, AND POLICE BRASS HAVE BEEN SIGHTED FREQUENTLY AT ALL THREE LOCATIONS. THERE APPEARED TO HAVE ONCE BEEN A LOCAL MILITARY COMMAND HEADQUARTERS NEAR THE EMBASSY, BUT IT NOW SEEMS TO HAVE BEN MOVED. TRAFFIC IS MOVING NORMALLY IN FRONT OF OUR BUILDING.

11. ALL USG INSTALLATIONS, EXCEPT THE AMERICAN INTERNATIONAL SCHOOL OF KABUL, RESUMED REGULAR OPERATIOONS TODAY. WE INTEND TO REOPEN OUR SCHOOL ON APRIL 30 (NEARBY FIGHTING HAD CAUSED SOME DAMAGE THERE.)
ELIOT

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